

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 20128

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEWT, EFIN, UR, US
SUBJECT: CALL ON NEW SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE

REF: MOSCOW 19215

1. DURING COURTESY CALL BY E/C COUNSELOR, NEWLY APPOINTED SOVIET
DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE VIKTOR IVANOV CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD

BE ASSUMING ALL OF THE FUNCTIONS OF HIS PREDECESSOR, VLADIMIR ALKHIMOV

(NOW STATE BANK DIRECTOR), EXCEPT THAT HE HAD NOT INHERITED
ALKHIMOV'S RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE US-USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL.

2. SINCE IVANOV PARTICIPATED IN RECENT SESSION OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC
COUNCIL, HIS VIEWS ON LEASE FINANCING WERE SOLICITED. HE COMMENTED
WITH OBVIOUS LACK OF ENTHUSIASM THAT THIS WOULD REQUIRE A VERY CON-
SIDERABLE AMOUNT OF STUDY. VLADIMIR KOMAROV, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
OF THE MAIN MONETARY DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE,
REMARKED SOMEWHAT MORE POSITIVELY THAT THIS FORM OF FINANCING COULD
BE APPLIED TO MOVEABLE PROPERTY. NEITHER IVANOV OR KOMAROV VENTURED
ANY COMMENT ON HOW BROADLY APPLICABLE THIS MIGHT BE IN
SOVIET CIRCUMSTANCES.

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3. DURING DISCUSSION OF U.S. GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS IN TRANSITION
PERIOD, E/C COUNSELOR OFFERED SUGGESTIVE PARALLEL - WITH
IMPLICIT REFERENCE TO YURY BREZHNEV APPOINTMENT - THAT A
SOVIET CABINET-RANK OFFICIAL, SUCH AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN
TRADE PATOLICHEV, MIGHT NOT ALWAYS BE ABLE TO CONTROL ALL

APPOINTMENTS IN HIS OWN MINISTRY. IVANOV SMILED BROADLY AND SAID THAT THIS WAS A "COMPLICATED" MATTER, BUT DID NOT VOLUNTEER ANY FURTHER COMMENT.

4. IVANOV MADE POLITE, LOW-KEY REFERENCE TO NEED FOR MFN AS IMPORTANT MATTER FOR USSR. NEITHER HE NOR KOMAROV COULD BE ENTICED INTO ANY SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ON FINANCING OF SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE BUT TURNED CONVERSATION TO MOSCOW WEATHER.

5. COMMENT: WE TAKE THIS AS CONFIRMATION THAT ALKHIMOV INTENDS TO CONTINUE HIS PARTICIPATION IN US-USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL, A HEALTHY SIGN OF HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET INTEREST IN BILATERAL TRADE.

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